Quality of Internet Services

*257. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) have conducted nation-wide surveys on the quality of service of the Internet Service Providers (ISPs);

(b) if so, the outcome thereof;

(c) whether according to the surveys, ISPs like SIFY, Dishnet, HCL and VSNL are not meeting the required quality benchmarks; and

(d) if so, what action Government propose to take against these companies?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE): (a) to (c) An online survey has been conducted by Telecome Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) during May-June, 2003 to find out the customers' preception of the quality of Internet Services. Based on the response of this online survey, the analysis report of TRAI indicates that some Internet Service Providers (ISPs) including SIFY, Dishnet and VSNL are not meeting the benchmarks. TRAI has itself indicated that the conclusions are subjective in nature and further technical study need to be carried out. However, there has been an improvement in quality of service being provided by these ISPs vis-a-vis the last survey carried out in June-July, 2000 specially with respect to customers' ability to get connected to ISP node, frequency of disconnections in the service and customers facing the "no reply" condition.

(d) As per Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) Act, 1977, as amended by TRAI (Amendment) Act, 2000, TRAI is mandated to lay down standards of quality of service to be provided by the service providers, Accordingly, TRAI has issued "Regulation on Quality of Service of Dial-up and leased line Internet Access Service, 2001 "This was published in the Extraordinary Gazetted of India on 10/12/2001. TRAI conducts periodical surveys in order to identify the areas requiring attention and holds consultation with service providers so as to protect the interest of consumers.

Based on inputs received from the online survey of May-June, 2003, TRAHhas undertaken further technical study to identify the bottlenecks in order to improve the quality of Internet services. For this purpose, TRAI has asked for Internet related traffic details from the Basic Service Operators and Internet Service Providers.

Invitation from Mauritius for Investment

*258. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Mauritius has invited Indian companies to invest in that country and use it as a base for trade with Africa, America and European Union;

(b) whether Mauritius also expects support from India in the form of technical assistance and investment for it's IT industry;

(c) if so, Government's reaction thereto; and

(d) the steps being taken to meet their demand?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI VINOD KHANNA): (a) and (b) Yes.

(c) and (d) Both countries have agreed, as part of efforts to promote trade and investment, to explore the possibility of concluding a comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement, which would eventually lead to a Free Trade Agreement between India and Mauritius. The Government of India is also assisting Mauritius in the IT sector and has extended a US$ 100 million line of credit to help establish a Cyber City in Mauritius.

Labour unrest in tea gardens of Assam

*259. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the labour unrest in tea gardens of Assam on 20 per cent bonus issue;

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto; and